

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

I Status Of The Claims

The Examiner's indication that claims 1-16, 18, 20-25, 27, and 28 are allowed, and that claims 19 and 26 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome minor informalities, is respectfully acknowledged.

Claim 17 has been canceled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the subject matter of claim 17 in a separate continuation application(s).

Claims 19 and 26 have been amended, as suggested by the Examiner, to correct the informalities noted in the Final Office Action. Additionally, claims 26-28, which depend from claim 17, have been rewritten in independent form, incorporating all the limitations of claim 17. No new matter has been added by these amendments. The amendments to claims 19 and 26-28 are not narrowing amendments, since the claims do not set forth any new limitations.

Claims 1-16, and 18-28 are pending in his application, and are currently under consideration.

II Claim Objections

Claims 19 ands 26 were objected to because of informalities. Claims 19 and 26 have been amended, as suggested by the Examiner on page 2 of the September 9, 2003 Final Office Action. Accordingly, the objection to claims 19 and 26 should be withdrawn.

III Claim Rejections

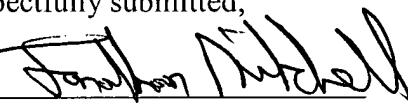
Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,705,084, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,080,511.

Claim 17 has been canceled without prejudice, rendering this rejection moot.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this amendment, and to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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